

ACCORD NEWSLETTER



A Joyous Celebration for Mrs. Cora Tyson's 102nd Birthday

On Sunday, June 1, 2025, Mrs. Cora Tyson—beloved Housemother to the Civil Rights Movement and Vice President of ACCORD—celebrated her 102nd birthday. The community honored this remarkable milestone with a full day of festivities, beginning with church services and a special Birthday Luncheon at St. Paul AME Church. Guests then gathered at the ACCORD Civil Rights Museum for a joyful birthday celebration, followed by the dedication of a Mint Garden in the Rosalie Gordon-Mills Heroes & Sheroes Memory Gardens. The day concluded with a lively Birthday Drive-by Caravan, sponsored by the City of St. Augustine Police Department, SWAT, and the City of St. Augustine Fire Department, ensuring that Mrs. Tyson's extraordinary life and contributions were celebrated in grand style.

Dozens of family members, friends, church members, community leaders, and even visiting tourists came out to meet and greet Mrs. Tyson, joining in the celebration of her remarkable 102 years. The festivities were filled with joy and music, featuring the talents of acclaimed jazz artist Doug Carn and the lively sounds of DJ Richie Rich of JAM TIME Productions.

The Rosalie Gordon-Mills Memory Gardens Is Now Open!

The Rosalie Gordon-Mills Memory Gardens were unveiled on June 1, 2025, on the 102nd birthday of Mrs. Cora Tyson. This garden is a celebration of the incredible life and legacy of Mrs. Rosalie Gordon Mills, Mrs. Cora Tyson, and many other local heroes and sheroes who played a significant role in the 1960's St. Augustine Civil Rights Movement and our community. ACCORD would like to extend a special thanks to all who assisted in the creation of the garden, ensuring this living tribute will be enjoyed for years to come.



Guests entering the garden with Mrs. Cora Tyson on her 102nd Birthday



Visit the Garden at the ACCORD Civil Rights Museum – 79 Bridge Street



Mrs. Cora Tyson Made her Famous Sweet Tea Historian David Nolan

David Nolan, Local Historian, Author, ACCORD Freedom Trail Tour narrator, and founding member of the 40th ACCORD, Inc., celebrated his 79th birthday on June 27, 2025. In honor of this milestone, ACCORD presented him with Mrs. Cora Tyson's famous tea—originally made for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Infused with vibrant flavors and fresh mint grown in her garden at the Rosalie Gordon-Mills Memory Gardens, the tea offers a truly memorable taste experience. ACCORD extends its heartfelt appreciation to both Mr. Nolan and Mrs. Tyson for their enduring support and contributions.



ART Exhibition and Book Signing Event with Irwin Brunson

On Saturday, March 22, 2025, ACCORD hosted a special Art Exhibition and Book Signing event featuring Irwin Brunson. Born the same year the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* decision became the law of the land, Brunson's life was deeply shaped by the Civil Rights Movement. On August 28, 1963, he, along with his brother Billy, sister Debbie, and their neighbors Michael, Gary, and Kenneth Roberson, made history as the first African American students to enroll at Fullerwood School—a previously all-white public school in St. Augustine, Florida, the nation's oldest city.

His exhibition and book, titled ***Life in Shades of Blue***, offer a deeply personal and powerful account of growing up in St. Augustine during the turbulent 1960s. Through both words and artwork, Brunson shares the challenges, triumphs, and everyday experiences of a transformative era in American history.

Join ACCORD and Irwin Brunson on the First Friday of each month through December 2025 for this ongoing exhibition and opportunity to engage with history through art and storytelling.

